

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the recitations of claim 8, and claim 8 has been canceled accordingly.

Since the Examiner indicated in paragraph 5 on page 3 of the Office Action that claim 8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim, Applicants submit that amended claim 1, which corresponds to claim 8 rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim, should be allowable, and thus entry of the amendment is respectfully requested.

PTO/SB/08 Form Filed October 5, 2006

Applicants note that a signed copy of the PTO/SB/08 form filed October 5, 2006 is attached to the Office Action, but the citation therein has not been initialed by the Examiner. While Applicants assume that the Examiner has considered the citation, Applicants respectfully request that she return an initialed copy of the form with the next communication from the PTO.

Art Rejections

On page 2 of the Office Action, in paragraph 2, claims 1-5 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Hiramoto et al. (USPN 6,745,540). Further, on page 3 of the Office Action, in paragraph 4, claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiramoto et al. (USPN 6,745,540) in view of Fang et al. (USPN 4,912,907).

In response, and to expedite allowance, Applicants have amended claim 1 to incorporate the recitations of claim 8, which has not been included in these rejections. Accordingly,

Applicants submit that amended claim 1 and dependent claims 2-7 are patentable over the cited art, and withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

Objection to Claim 8

On page 3 of the Office Action, in paragraph 5, the Examiner has objected to claim 8 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but has indicated that it would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

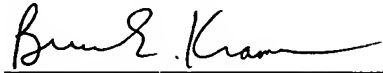
Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claim 8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Based on the Examiner's indication, Applicants have amended claim 1 to incorporate the recitations of claim 8, such that amended claim 1 corresponds to claim 8 rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim (there are no intervening claims). In view of the amendment of claim 1, claim 8 has been canceled, thereby obviating the objection to claim 8. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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